

days after service of the notice of hearing unless the hearing is expedited as provided under paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) A request for a change in the time, place, or date of the hearing may be granted by the Judge.

(c) Upon the consent of each party to the administrative proceeding, the Judge may order that one or more issues be heard on submissions or affidavits if it appears that such issues may be resolved by means of written materials and that efficient disposition of those issues can be made without an in-person hearing.

(d) At any time after commencement of an administrative proceeding, any party may move to expedite the scheduling of the administrative proceeding as provided in § 904.209.

§ 904.251 Evidence.

(a) *In general.* (1) At the hearing, every party has the right to present oral or documentary evidence in support of its case or defense, to submit rebuttal evidence, and to conduct such cross-examination as may be required for a full and true disclosure of the facts. This paragraph may not be interpreted to diminish the powers and duties of the Judge under § 904.204.

(2) All evidence that is relevant, material, reliable, and probative, and not unduly repetitious or cumulative, is admissible at the hearing. Formal rules of evidence do not necessarily apply to the administrative proceedings, and hearsay evidence is not inadmissible as such.

(3) In any case involving a charged violation of law in which the respondent has admitted an allegation, evidence may be taken to establish matters of aggravation or mitigation.

(b) *Objections and offers of proof.* (1) A party shall state the grounds for objection to the admission or exclusion of evidence. Rulings on all objections shall appear in the record. Only objections made before the Judge may be raised on appeal.

(2) Whenever evidence is excluded from the record, the party offering such evidence may make an offer of proof, which shall be included in the record.

(c) *Testimony.* (1) Testimony may be received into evidence by the following means:

(i) Oral presentation; and

(ii) Subject to the discretion of the Judge, written affidavit, telephone, video or other electronic media.

(2) Regardless of form, all testimony shall be under oath or affirmation requiring the witness to declare that the witness will testify truthfully, and subject to cross examination.

(d) *Exhibits and documents.* (1) All exhibits shall be numbered and marked with a designation identifying the sponsor. To prove the content of an exhibit, the original writing, recording or photograph is required except that a duplicate or copy is admissible to the same extent as an original unless a genuine question is raised as to the authenticity of the original or, given the circumstances, it would be unfair to admit the duplicate in lieu of the original. The original is not required, and other evidence of the contents of a writing, recording, or photograph is admissible if the original is lost or destroyed, not obtainable, in the possession of the opponent, or not closely related to a controlling issue. Each exhibit offered in evidence or marked for identification shall be filed and retained in the record of decision, unless the Judge permits the substitution of copies for the original document.

(2) In addition to the requirements set forth in § 904.240(a)(2), parties shall exchange all remaining exhibits that will be offered at hearing prior to the beginning of the hearing, except for good cause or as otherwise directed by the Judge. Exhibits that are not exchanged as required may be denied admission into evidence. This requirement does not apply to demonstrative evidence.

(e) *Physical evidence.* (1) Photographs or videos or other electronic media may be substituted for physical evidence at the discretion of the Judge.

(2) Except upon the Judge's order, or upon request by a party, physical evidence will be retained after the hearing by the Agency.

(f) *Stipulations.* The parties may, by written stipulation at any stage of the administrative proceeding or orally at the hearing, agree upon any matters.

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Stipulations may be received in evidence before or during the hearing and, when received in evidence, shall be binding on the parties to the stipulation.

(g) *Official notice.* The Judge may take official notice of such matters as might be judicially noticed by the courts or of other facts within the specialized knowledge of the agency as an expert body. Where a decision or part thereof rests on official notice of a material fact not appearing in the evidence in the record, the fact of official notice shall be so stated in the decision, and any party, upon timely request, shall be afforded an opportunity to show the contrary.

(h) *Confidential and sensitive information.* (1) The Judge may limit introduction of evidence or issue protective orders that are required to prevent undue disclosure of classified, confidential, or sensitive matters, which include, but are not limited to, matters of a national security, business, personal, or proprietary nature. Where the Judge determines that information in documents containing classified, confidential, or sensitive matters should be made available to another party, the Judge may direct the offering party to prepare an unclassified or non-sensitive summary or extract of the original. The summary or extract may be admitted as evidence in the record.

(2) If the Judge determines that the procedure described in paragraph (h)(1) of this section is inadequate and that classified or otherwise sensitive matters must form part of the record in order to avoid prejudice to a party, the Judge may advise the parties and provide opportunity for arrangements to permit a party or representative to have access to such matters.

(i) *Foreign law.* (1) A party who intends to raise an issue concerning the law of a foreign country must give reasonable notice. The Judge, in determining foreign law, may consider any relevant material or source, whether or not submitted by a party.

(2) Exhibits in a foreign language must be translated into English before such exhibits are offered into evidence. Copies of both the untranslated and translated versions of the proposed exhibits, along with the name and quali-

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fications of the translator, must be served on the opposing party at least 10 days prior to the hearing unless the parties otherwise agree.

§ 904.252 Witnesses.

(a) *Fees.* Witnesses, other than employees of a Federal agency, summoned in an administrative proceeding, including discovery, shall receive the same fees and mileage as witnesses in the courts of the United States.

(b) *Witness counsel.* Any witness not a party may have personal counsel to advise him or her as to his or her rights, but such counsel may not otherwise participate in the hearing.

(c) *Witness exclusion.* Witnesses who are not parties may be excluded from the hearing room prior to the taking of their testimony. An authorized officer is considered a party for the purposes of this subsection.

(d) *Oath or affirmation.* Witnesses shall testify under oath or affirmation requiring the witness to declare that the witness will testify truthfully.

(e) *Failure or refusal to testify.* If a witness fails or refuses to testify, the failure or refusal to answer any question found by the Judge to be proper may be grounds for striking all or part of the testimony given by the witness, or any other action deemed appropriate by the Judge.

(f) *Testimony in a foreign language.* If a witness is expected to testify in a language other than the English language, the party sponsoring the witness must provide for the services of an interpreter and advise opposing counsel 10 days prior to the hearing concerning the extent to which interpreters are to be used. When available, the interpreter should be court certified under 28 U.S.C. 1827.

§ 904.253 Closing of record.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the evidentiary record shall be closed unless the Judge directs otherwise. Once the record is closed, no additional evidence shall be accepted except upon a showing that the evidence is material and that there was good cause for failure to produce it in a timely fashion. The Judge shall reflect in the record, however, any approved correction to the transcript.